

Driggers, JamesEXHIBIT 42
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HB 2

From: pj ward [peej@montana.com]
Sent: Wednesday, January 24, 2007 11:58 PM
To: Driggers, James
Cc: Gentry, Amy
Subject: Legislative Testimony

January 25, 2007

Dear Madame Chairman and members of the committee,

I am Edmund Ward from Missoula Montana. I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the support of this committee and the state, in the care of my 16-year-old son Finn Ward. He sustained a severe brain injury 8 months ago. His recovery process is long and exhausting, but steady thanks to all of the participating players- Amy Gentry, Tim Laskowski, Jayne Lux and Big Sky Nursing. Thank you for your excellent care.

While Finn was hospitalized at St Pats, Hyperbaric Oxygenation treatment was started, 4 weeks after the initial injury and ran for 6 weeks (twice a day, one hour each session). Doctors and family were able to witness signs of improvement... He became more alert and aware of people, and his environment. He became less dependent on daily breathing treatments. Finns bedsores and multiple skin wounds healed rapidly, his bowel tones returned (indicating that his intestinal tract began to function again). He was able to begin to take a few short steps standing up right and responded appropriately with smiles or grimacing. Amazing Progress!! This treatment provided healing that assisted him to move toward the next level of becoming independent.

Unfortunately, it is unknown what level of recovery Finn could have experienced had Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy been made available at Mayo Clinic once he was transferred there. Perhaps if we had been able to restart Oxygen therapy upon his return home last October, it could have minimized the serve pain caused by chronic spasticity throughout his entire body. He is now on a multitude of meds in order to try to combat this, but yet- no relief at this time. This is a horrible quality of life for him and severely impedes his rehabilitation progress. He is unable to speak even though he is cognitively aware of everything in his environment. He is unable to eat or drink and is entirely dependent on liquid tube feeding for his nutrition. Finn is continually being treated for infection around his feeding tube and both hands, as they are severely contracture and pressing against his palms. His arms and hands are not functioning at all due to continual spasticity and the horrible pain that comes with it.

I feel very strongly and agree with many doctors that the effectiveness of Hyperbaric Oxygenation treatments have proven to be beneficial, early on, in helping my son move towards recovery, and ultimately caring for himself. I am asking for your financial support in restarting Hyperbaric Oxygenation treatments for Finn, without delay. Thank-you

1/25/2007